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ABSTRACT

This conference was designed to assist educators and administrators at small colleges in the planning, implementing, and refining of programs designed to enhance students' first-year experience. The conference addressed the special environments, challenges, and opportunities for success in the first-year experience. Conference presentations were categorized into five theme tracks: (1) enhancing institutional environments; (2) special populations of first-year students; (3) assessment and accountability; (4) curricular and cocurricular strategies; and (5) other issues. Paragraph-length descriptions of conference presentations are provided, followed by one-to-two-page outlines of 23 of the presentations. Presentations examine such topics as academic advising, electronic journaling, portfolio assessment, community service, developmental curricula, freshmen seminars, mentors, life skills development, early warning of risk of failure, commuter students, and supplemental instruction. (JDD)

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ED 374 765

The Freshman Year Experience
Seventh Annual Conference

for

Small Campuses

Conference Program and Proceedings

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Minneapolis, Minnesota
October 20-22, 1994

Hosted by

University of South Carolina
National Resource Center for
The Freshman Year Experience
Division of Continuing Education
Marietta College
The Council of Independent Colleges

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Creating Campus Communities for Enhanced Student . . .

✔ LEARNING ✔ SUCCESS ✔ SATISFACTION ✔ RETENTION

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Schedule of Events

Thursday, October 20, 1994

8:00 am - 6:00 pm	Registration - *Foyer*
9:00 am - 4:00 pm	Topical Preconference Workshops
7:00 pm - 9:30 pm	Opening Banquet - *Ballroom A* *Keynote Speaker:* **Robert Albright**, Educational Testing Service

Friday, October 21, 1994

7:45 am - 8:45 am	Primer for First-Time Attendees - *Ballroom C* **John N. Gardner**, National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience
9:00 am - 10:00 am	Session I - concurrent presentations
10:00 am - 10:15 am	Refreshment Break - *Foyer*
10:15 am - 11:15 am	Session II - concurrent presentations
11:30 am - 12:30 pm	Session III - concurrent presentations
12:30 pm - 2:00 pm	Luncheon - *Ballroom C* **Stephen Brookfield**,University of Saint Thomas
2:15 pm - 3:15 pm	Session IV - concurrent presentations
3:15 pm - 3:45 pm	Refreshment Break - *Foyer*
3:45 pm - 4:45 pm	Session V - concurrent presentations
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm	Roundtable discussions

Dinner on your own

Saturday, October 22, 1994

9:00 am - 10:00 am	Session VI - concurrent presentations
10:00 am - 10:30 am	Refreshment Break - *Foyer*
10:30 am - 11:30 am	Session VII - concurrent presentations
11:45 am - 1:00 pm	Closing Session - *Cedar Room*

Hosting Institutions

University of South Carolina

Founded in 1801 as South Carolina College, the University of South Carolina is currently one of the nation's foremost centers for teaching, research, and public service. The University's eight-campus system enrolls approximately 41,376 students, of whom 25,439 are enrolled on the Columbia campus. The University offers baccalaureate degrees in 79 majors, master's degrees in 167 fields, and doctorates in 68 fields, including law, medicine, pharmacy, and public health.

Since its origin in 1972, the University 101 program has been a pioneer and a national leader in enhancing the freshman year. The program consists of a freshman seminar course and an accompanying faculty development program. A large number of colleges and universities in the United States and Canada have developed programs modeled after the University 101 program. The National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience has as its purpose the collection and dissemination of information about the freshman year. To that end, the Center organizes and hosts national and international conferences, seminars, and workshops; engages in research; and publishes a scholarly journal, newsletter, monograph series, and other publications, all of which are dedicated to expanding available knowledge about freshman programming and factors that enhance the success of first-year students.

The Division of Continuing Education is one of the oldest professional continuing education organizations in the country. The Division has long been committed to hosting and supporting conferences of excellence and distinction.

Marietta College

Marietta College is an independent, predominantly residential undergraduate institution. Committed to liberal arts education with a meaningful career orientation, the college attempts to add to the knowledge of students and to provide them with the tools necessary to develop an effective life.

Marietta College, a privately supported and co-educational college of approximately 1,150 students, is located in Marietta, Ohio, a city of 17,000, 114 miles southeast of Columbus. Founded in 1788, Marietta is submerged in an area with historic associations and traditions and retains the characteristics and atmosphere of a New England town. Marietta grants six degrees and strives to educate students to know themselves, to have a commitment to citizenship and leadership, and to have a concern for other people.

The Council of Independent Colleges

The Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) is a national association of independent liberal arts colleges. Founded in 1956, CIC assists approximately 325 member institutions in improving their educational programs, administrative and financial performance, and institutional visibility. CIC offers a comprehensive set of services which include the following: annual institutes for presidents, deans, faculty, and fund raisers; a tuition exchange; a consulting network; and workshops on topical issues. The Association also sponsors special projects on key issues, such as a recent study of the academic culture in liberal arts colleges, an exchange program between historically black colleges and other private institutions, and a national press campaign to promote small independent colleges. The eleven year old Consortium for the Advancement of Private Higher Education (CAPHE), an operating unit of CIC beginning in 1983, administers grant programs to help private colleges and universities meet the changing needs of students, employers, and society.

General Information

Welcome

Welcome to the Seventh Freshman Year Experience Special Focus Conference on Small Campuses. This conference will address the special environments, challenges, and opportunities for success in the first-year experience at small colleges. We hope that you will be like the more than 1,300 educators who have attended previous FYE small college meetings. These past attendees found the conferences to be excellent settings for new ideas and information about enhancing the freshman year experience for students.

Goals of the Conference

The primary goal of this conference is to assist educators and administrators in small colleges (those with undergraduate enrollments of less than 5,000 students) in the planning, implementing, and refining of programs designed to enhance the first-year experience. The presentations center around five theme tracks (specified on page the next page).

Conference Background

The University of South Carolina and the University 101 program hosted the first National Conference on the Freshman Orientation Course/Freshman Seminar Concept in February 1982. The conference was attended by 173 post-secondary educators from public, private, two-year, four-year, and senior institutions in the United States. This group was interested in developing new programs to promote freshman retention and adjustments through freshman seminar courses. Those attending this first conference proposed a second conference with a broader focus. Conference host, John Gardner, changed the name and the focus for 1983 to the National Conference on The Freshman Year Experience.

This national conference series has hosted a total of 51 meetings in California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Ontario, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Scotland, England, and Ireland.

Exhibitors

The University of South Carolina and the Conference on The Freshman Year Experience welcome exhibitors commercial and non-profit. The following exhibitors will be present at this conference: College Survival/Houghton Mifflin, Wadsworth Publishing Company, Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company and the National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience

General Information

Format for Conference Participations

All conference sessions will be held at the Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport Hilton. At the back of this program, you will find a floor plan of the hotel to assist you in locating the appropriate meeting rooms. The variety of session formats include both interactive presentations and interest sessions designed for discussion and information sharing.

Theme Tracks and Symbols

This conference lends itself to a wide variety of subjects and topical areas as is evidenced by the wide range of presenters and topics. Most conference presentations can be categorized into one of the following five theme tracks. These symbols appear throughout the program schedule to assist you in identifying related areas of programming emphasis.

Enhancing Institutional Environments

Special Populations of First-Year Students

Assessment and Accountability

Curricular and Co-curricular Strategies

Other Issues

Back by Popular Demand

A select group of outstanding concurrent sessions from past Conferences on The Freshman Year Experience have been invited to return for an encore presentation. Look for the "certificate" of approval under the program description.

Messages

There will be a Message Board near the FYE registration table. Please check the board periodically for important general or personal messages.

No-Smoking Policy

The conference organizers request a strict observance of the no-smoking policy in the meeting rooms and dining areas. We enforce this rule due to the growing concern about health risks associated with passive exposure to cigarette smoke.

Conference Planning Staff

National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience
University of South Carolina

John N. Gardner
Director

Betsy O. Barefoot
Co-Director, Research and Publications

Mary Stuart Hunter
Co-Director, Conferences and Administration

Dan Berman
Co-Director, Instruction and Faculty Development

Dorothy S. Fidler
Senior Managing Editor

Student Aides
Alisha Bain
Amy Davies
Candler Hearn
Sydney Moore
Heath Widdowson

Marietta College

William C. Hartel
Professor of History
Co-Director of the Freshman Year

Fred Voner
Associate Professor of Geology

Teri Anderson
Graduate Assistant

Vicky P. Howell
Administrative Assistant

C. Mark Lackey
Conference/Marketing Assistant

Nina Long
Assistant Conference Coordinator

Ilana Myerson
Conference Coordinator

Penny J. Smoak
Administrative Assistant

The Council of Independent Colleges

Russell Y. Garth
Vice President

Thursday, October 20, 1994

Conference Registration

8:00 am - 6:00 pm

Foyer

Preconference Workshops

Freshman Seminar Instructor Training Workshop

9:00 am - 4:00 pm ✔ $165 ✔ *Meeting Room Two*

Mary Stuart Hunter, *Co-Director, National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience and Conference Host*, University of South Carolina

Teaching for Performance, Assessment and Retention: To Serve the Learner

1:00 pm - 4:00 pm ✔ $85 ✔ *Meeting Room Three*

Victoria Thorpe Miller, *Assistant Professor of English*, Alverno College

Judeen Schulte, *Professor of Nursing*, Alverno College

New Students, New Teaching

1:00 pm - 5:00 pm ✔ $110 ✔ *Meeting Room Four*

Diane Strommer, *Dean University College and Special Academic Programs*, University of Rhode Island, and author of *Teaching College Freshmen*

Opening Banquet

7:00 pm - 9:30 pm

Ballroom A

The Future is Here: Imperatives for a New Vision of Freshman Studies

Robert L. Albright

Executive Vice President for Programs, Research, Development and Field Services, Educational Testing Service, and former President,

Johnson C. Smith University

Primer for First-Time Attendees

Friday, October 21, 1994

Ballroom C
7:45 am - 8:45 am

John N. Gardner
Director, University 101 and National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience
University of South Carolina

A tradition at Freshman Year Experience Conferences since 1984, the "primer" session will review the background events which led to the creation of University 101 at the University of South Carolina and the resulting series of conferences and a national higher education reform movement known as "The Freshman Year Experience." Gardner will attempt to explicate the meaning of this now ubiquitous concept in higher education and spell out the philosophical assumptions which underlie this conference series. Attendance is welcome by all, but is particularly appropriate for first-time attendees at Freshman Year Experience Conferences.

Session I ✧ 9:00 am - 10:00 am

Friday, October 21, 1994

Notes

1

EARLY Academic Warning

Meeting Room One

Thomas J. Rookey
Academic Dean
Medaille College

The focus of Early Warning is retention in an adult student environment. Systems across the country include intrusive advising and studies of "why qualified fail." Our work shows that those who stay are comparable to those who leave. We have a system of two contracts to force the issue of getting help and avoiding isolation. We now have an attendance check, follow-up at semesters start and midsemester warnings are now action forms. Advising has been changed to an intrusive element emphasizing contact. We revised the Learning in College course to an adult version.

2

A Life Skills Development Model

Meeting Room Two

Susan Bauers-Joslin
Vice President for Student and Alumni Affairs
Nebraska Methodist College

At Nebraska Methodist College holistic life skill development is believed to be a necessity for humans to achieve personal and professional success and life-long self development, as well as to demonstrate a positive influence in the community. The foundation for this comprehensive approach is provided by the Life Skills Development Model. The model serves as a guiding force for programming and services on campus and provides a framework for enhanced curricular infusion of life skills. This presentation will provide an overview of the entire model and its implementation, a description of its multiplicity of functions for the College, and a description of its evolution with the College mission and core values.

3 4 Notes

Profile Portfolio: Assessment to Improve Student Competence

Meeting Room Three

Nan Hackett
Assistant Professor of English
Concordia College

Eunice C. Streufert
Director, Student
Academic Advising
Concordia College

At Concordia-St. Paul, due to faculty and student concern, the First-Year Seminar was changed significantly to incorporate our ideas of how students can be more actively involved in the course, in their academic advising and in informed lifelong decision making. Student portfolios were seen as possible means for transferring responsibility of the learning process and student development from the instructor/advisor to the student. The presentation focuses on how instructor/advisors and peer advisors help students use the College Student Inventory (CSI) and the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI) data to design specific measurable strategies to improve student competence.

Adapting a Developmental First-Year Seminar to Address Issues of Cultural Diversity

Meeting Room Four

Stuart Tennant
Vice President of Student Affairs
Willamette University

The presenter originally developed a First-Year Colloquium, "Young Adulthood: The College Experience," as part of his doctoral dissertation research. The initial Colloquium employed psychosocial theory; specifically, Chickering's first four vectors of development, and Erickson's concept of identity formation. Initially the presenter employed much of the "traditional" literature of college experience - e.g., Trilling's "Of This Time, of That Place," in order to present fictional young adults engaging in the kinds of developmental issues that the theory base alludes to. Subsequently, the presenter adapted his literature selections so that an African-American experience might be encountered. Currently the presenter is adapting the original developmental model to reflect a Native American perspective. The presenter's thesis is that there is enough "common ground" when examining the developmental tasks of young adults engaged in identity formation to incorporate cultural differences. A first-year seminar instructor can, therefore, adapt the literary content of a seminar so as to acknowledge the distinct perspectives of cultures other than the traditional Euro-centric view that has pervaded the Academy.

Refreshment Break

10:00 am - 10:15 am

Foyer

Session II ✧ 10:15 am - 11:15 am

Friday, October 21, 1994

Notes

5

The Co-Curriculum as Curriculum: Conversations Among Campus Constituencies in a First-Year Seminar

Meeting Room One

Kathy Jonas
Dean of Students
Pine Manor College

Stephen Thompson
Dean of First-Year Students
Pine Manor College

At Pine Manor College we are redesigning our "first-year seminar" to be a more collaborative enterprise involving several campus constituencies. The first-year seminar is being planned and organized around the conviction that the co-curriculum and the curriculum are a seamless web; that one learns as much from conversations and interactions outside the classroom as inside it. We have focused our attention and energy on how to better integrate these curricula into a coherent campus experience. We will share our experience as this course has evolved by using case studies and current theories regarding student success.

6

Service-Learning: The Freshman Year and Beyond

Meeting Room Three

Howard A. Berry
President
The Partnership for
Service-Learning

Service-learning -- the union of academic studies and community service -- has demonstrated its strong educational and developmental potential. When made part of the mainstream of the curriculum and of a coherent, educational strategy, service-learning can enrich and enliven teaching and learning across the curriculum, and contribute to student development, growth, values, and involvement in the community and the world. The session will present these implications of service-learning, especially when begun in the freshman year and continued as part of general education. Special attention will be paid to small campuses and their unique ability to implement service-learning on a campus-wide basis.

Session II ✧ 10:15 am - 11:15 am

Friday, October 21, 1994

7

Models of Innovations and Exploration: Freshman Seminars on Small Campuses

Meeting Room Four

Betsy Barefoot
Co-Director for Research
and Publications
National Resource Center for The
Freshman Year Experience
University of South Carolina

Freshman seminars on American campuses are a diverse group of courses designed for many purposes and intending many outcomes. But the most creative and innovative freshman seminars are generally found on small campuses. Using quantitative and qualitative data from the most recent national survey of freshman seminars, this presentation will provide information on the many ways such courses are being implemented in small liberal arts colleges, their common as well as their distinguishing features. Participants will be encouraged to share ideas, concerns, and questions about developing and/or maintaining a freshman seminar that both conforms to the unique mission and purpose of an institution and meets the needs of entering students.

Notes

Session III ✧ 11:30 am - 12:30 pm

Friday, October 21, 1994

Notes

8

Freshman Seminar: A Natural Setting for Faculty Development

Meeting Room One

Mary Stuart Hunter
Co-Director for Conferences and Administration
National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience
University of South Carolina

Efforts to prepare faculty and professional staff for teaching freshman seminars provides a natural setting for faculty and staff development, enrichment, and growth. This session will describe the faculty development efforts associated with the University 101 program at the University of South Carolina. Additionally, the session will provide an opportunity for those attending the session to share ideas and learn from one another about successful practices on campuses across the country.

9

Mentoring, Community Service, and Orientation: The Freshman Experience at Drury College - Birth to Five Years

Meeting Room Two

Carole Riesenberg
Director, Freshman Experience Program
Drury College

Gayle Wood
Assistant Professor of Communication
Drury College

This session will briefly describe the evolution of the current freshman program and the proposed freshman seminar course at Drury College in Springfield, Missouri. The primary emphasis of the presentation will be the key factors which give the program coherence, flexibility, and a strong foundation for a highly successful orientation program involving 20 faculty mentors, 48 student orientation leaders, student services staff, and administration. Reference will be made to retention figures, results of the 1994 Orientation Evaluation survey, and the ACT Survey of Academic Advising administered pre-post mentoring program.

Session III ✧ 11:30 am - 12:30 pm

Friday, October 21, 1994

10

Notes

Building Communities: Bridges to Changing Campus Culture

Meeting Room Three

Roseanne Gill-Jacobson
Associate Dean of Student Life
Marietta College

Michelle Daniels
Vice President of Student Life
Marietta College

At Marietta College, the Student Life Staff is currently taking leadership across the campus through a variety of new programs. Currently the staff is re-evaluating old programs and changing paradigms to create new opportunities for leadership. The Residence Life area is no exception. Building communities within the residence halls is the underlying theme of the residence life area. This program explores creating communities in residential living units and empowers students to take responsibilities for the way they live.

Luncheon

Friday, October 21, 1994

Ballroom C

12:30 pm - 2:00 pm

Through the Lens of Learning:
How Experiencing Learning Changes How We Educate Students

Stephen Brookfield

Distinguished Professor, Graduate School of Education,
University of Saint Thomas
author of *The Skillful Teacher*

Session IV ✧ 2:15 pm - 3:15 pm

Friday, October 21, 1994

Notes

11

Summer Success Program - Beyond Developmental Education

Meeting Room One

Stuart Green
Dean, Arts and Sciences
Indiana University-Kokomo

Linda Newby
Coordinator of Guided Studies
Indiana University-Kokomo

Indiana University-Kokomo's Summer Success Program has one goal: To help underprepared, potential academic failures transform themselves into potential academic successes. By combining an innovative two-course interdisciplinary curriculum, by setting it in a supportive camp-like summer environment, and by creating a student-centered learning team consisting of faculty, staff, and peer mentors, we believe that we are creating a unique program that allows students to bridge their academic shortcomings and attain a plateau of academic preparation that will sustain them through the critical first year of college and beyond.

12

Sustaining Faculty Support for a Freshman Preceptorial Program: The Challenges of a Mature Program

Meeting Room Two

Mitchell R. Malachowski
Associate Dean
Professor of Chemistry
University of San Diego

Sustaining momentum for academic advising in a mature advising program requires activities different from those in new programs. In this session the freshman preceptorial program at the University of San Diego will be outlined and its strengths and weaknesses discussed. This program involves forty-six faculty who teach small classes (12-18 freshmen each) and serve as the students' advisor until they declare a major. Innovative academic components, advising initiatives, treatment of cultural diversity issues, and efforts to enhance student-faculty interactions will be highlighted. Particular attention will be paid to activities devoted to engaging senior faculty in the program.

Session IV ✧ 2:15 pm - 3:15 pm

Friday, October 21, 1994

13

The Relationship Between Gender and Student Outcomes in a Freshman Seminar Course

Meeting Room Three

Anne Blackhurst
Assistant Professor
Mankato State University

Outcomes studies have demonstrated that two of the important factors affecting first-year students' development and achievement are gender and the presence of a faculty or staff mentor. However, little research has been done to examine the relationship between gender and mentoring relationships during the first year of college. This session will present the results of a study, conducted on the Marietta College campus, examining the relationship between students' gender and outcomes in a freshman seminar course. In addition, the session will examine the relationship between the freshman seminar instructor's gender and first-year students' development and academic achievement.

14

Conversation with Stephen Brookfield

Meeting Room Four

Stephen Brookfield
Professor, Graduate School of Education
University of Saint Thomas

This session is designed to allow conference participants to continue the dialogue initiated at the luncheon and to ask further questions of Stephen Brookfield.

Notes

Refreshment Break

3:15 pm - 3:45 pm

Foyer

Notes

15

Soundings: An Introduction to the Liberal Arts

Meeting Room One

Victoria Angis
Director of Student Activities
Castleton State College

John Gillen
Professor of English
Castleton State College

Bill Ramage
Professor of Art
Castleton State College

Since 1985, new students entering Castleton State College have been required to take "Soundings: An Introduction to the Liberal Arts". This unique course combines lectures, films and performances with student and faculty interaction to produce a varied and stimulating campus environment. The faculty instructor and administrative coordinator of Soundings will describe the history, philosophy, and structure of this innovative new student experience.

16

Two Highly Successful Programs for High Risk College Freshmen in a Small University Setting

Meeting Room Two

Michol Hite
Counselor
Mercer University

Two programs, initiated in the fall quarter, 1993 resulted in outstanding success for the freshmen. The first program is a specially designed, 10-day intensive pre-school experience for incoming freshmen. The program engages 50 students in their first college experience designed to equip them with skills to succeed academically, emotionally, and socially. The second intervention, called "Life Contracts", refers to commitments made by individual students, their family, and the college counselor to ensure success in college.

Session V ✧ 3:45 pm - 4:45 pm

Friday, October 21, 1994

17

Notes

Improving Academic Advising: The First Year and Beyond

Meeting Room Three

Anthony Brown
Assistant Professor of Psychology
Baker University

In this presentation, academic advising will be examined from two different perspectives. First, research on how students' perceptions of advisors' roles change during their academic careers will be presented. Discussion of this research will focus on overall rankings and importance ratings of these roles, and changes in students' perceptions from their freshman to senior year. Second, an enhanced advising system currently being tested at Baker University will be presented. Discussion of this program will focus on the proposed timetable for meetings, hypothesized questions students may have during the year, and issues on which the meetings might focus.

Roundtable Discussion Sessions

Friday, October 21, 1994

Meeting Rooms One, Two, Three and Four
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm

See conference message board for topics and room assignments

Notes

18

The First-Year Student-Athlete: Examining Persistence Rates at Kentucky Wesleyan College

Meeting Room One

James E. Welch
Associate Professor
Kentucky Wesleyan College

This study is an inquiry of first-year student-athletes as to why they leave Kentucky Wesleyan College prior to starting their sophomore year. The inquiry examined the current year's (1993-1994) athletes, as well as, the previous three freshman classes. The study was broken down into three segments: archival research, a survey of current athletes, and interviews with student-athletes and other concerned parties. The findings revealed that both athletes' and nonathletes' persistence rates had a number of similarities.

19

Writing Across the Country

Meeting Room Two

Katherine M. Fischer
Instructor, Writing Center Director
Clarke College

Stephen Newmann
Lecturer
Mount St. Mary's College

This project involves the e-journaling (electronic journaling) about issues and experiences of their first-year students who have been arranged in writing groups on Internet e-mail across 800 miles. The presentation will stress the collaborative nature of the project for both the teachers and their students and the outcomes realized. "Writing Across the Country" is an "in progress" adventure as this conference convenes. Co-presenters welcome comments, questions, and discussion of the project.

Session VI ✧ 9:00 am - 10:00 am

Saturday, October 22, 1994

20

Developing a F.I.R.S.T. Program

Meeting Room Three

Michelle Ballew
Director of Residential Programming
Keuka College

The Freshman In Residence Student Training (F.I.R.S.T.) program was developed at Keuka College to address the developmental and cultural needs and concerns of the first-year resident students. This session will focus on the steps taken to develop this program. There will also be a discussion on how the implementation has worked at Keuka.

21

Freshman Seminar Revisited: Thirteen Years Later

Meeting Room Four

William Hartel
Co-Director of Freshman Year
Marietta College

Frederick Voner
Co-Director of Freshman Year
Marietta College

This session will discuss a comparison of Marietta College's Freshman Experience course when it was first introduced in 1981 with the College Experience Seminar as part of the general education requirement for all students in 1994. From an experimental two sections in 1981 the course has gone through many changes which reflect not only the politics of freshman transition courses but also the changing perceived needs of students, facutly, and the institution in general. Examples of successes as well as failures will highlight the session.

Notes

Refreshment Break

10:00 am - 10:30 am

Foyer

22

Notes

22

Serving the Freshman Adult Commuter Student

Meeting Room One

Tom Eckert
Director of Guidance
Nicolet College

John Seefeld
Career Counselor Instructor
Nicolet College

Susan Kordula
Director of Admissions
Nicolet College

During this program, presenters will facilitate a sharing/brainstorming session on serving the freshman, adult commuter students. This often elusive group, because of work, family, and other obligations, presents a unique challenge. We would like participants to share successful programs and practices (we will start the process) and then brainstorm together ways to improve services to this group. We will provide a notetaker and will mail a final product to all who attend. We will also create a "participant list" for those wishing to form a network to continue the dialogue.

24

From Orientation to Advising: The Eight-Week Freshman Seminar

Meeting Room Two

Boyd Creasman
Assistant Professor of English
West Virginia Wesleyan College

Alice Leigh
Director of New Student Programs
West Virginia Wesleyan College

In the Freshman Seminar Program of West Virginia Wesleyan College, seminar leaders and upper-level student leaders convene their seminar groups of fifteen to twenty first-year students during Orientation and then meet with them an hour each week for eight weeks, at which time freshmen are assigned advisors from their respective majors. The weekly sessions are designed to encourage meaningful connections among students, who sharpen communication skills while exploring college issues and clarifying their educational goals. Students are graded Pass/Fail and earn one semester hour of credit if they pass the course. We believe that this Freshman Seminar program makes the transition to college smoother, offers a forum for sharing ideas, provides interim advising, and builds a sense of community among first-year students.

Session VII ✧ 10:30 am - 11:30 am

Saturday, October 22, 1994

24

Utilizing Peer Mentors to Enhance the Freshman Year Experience for At Risk Freshmen

Meeting Room Three

Laurie Beth Hager
Freshman Mentoring Coordinator
Mayville State University

Since 1991, Mayville State University has enhanced the freshman year experience of at risk freshmen via a peer mentoring program. The FRIEND/BEFRIENDer Program (Freshmen Reaching out In Exciting New Directions and Buddies Encouraging FRIENDs) matches incoming freshmen (FRIENDs) with upperclassmen (BEFRIENDers) who have been trained to guide new students through the first year. This presentation will overview the program's design and purposes, outline peer mentor training and program activities. Results from the early identification of at risk students, the student adaptation to college questionnaire (SACQ), and college retention statistics will be examined.

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Supplemental Instruction: Improving First-Year Student Success in High Risk Courses

Meeting Room Four

David Arendale
National Project Director
University of Missouri - Kansas City

Supplemental Instruction (SI), a peer collaborative academic assistance program, targets historically difficult academic courses and offers to all enrolled students regularly scheduled, out-of-class, peer facilitated sessions. SI study sessions are informal seminars in which students compare notes, discuss readings, develop organizational tools and predict test items. Students learn how to integrate course content and study skills. The SI leader, usually a peer, acts as a model student of the discipline. National research studies over the past decade from 146 institutions (2,875 college courses) document the following benefits for SI attendees: higher course grades (one-half to one full letter grade), a lower percentage of course withdrawals, higher semester re-enrollment rates, and higher graduation rates.

Notes

Closing Session

Saturday, October 22, 1994

Cedar Room
11:45 am - 1:00 pm

facilitated by

John N. Gardner
M. Stuart Hunter
Betsy O. Barefoot
University of South Carolina

This concluding session is designed as an open discussion on ideas and information presented during the conference sessions and current issues related to supporting first-year students. Active participation by all participants is encouraged. We are especially interested in what people have learned and where we need to go from here.

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IMPROVING ACADEMIC ADVISING: THE FIRST YEAR AND BEYOND

Anthony L. Brown
Assistant Professor of Psychology

BAKER UNIVERSITY

Academic advising is often like many home improvement projects: you may do an adequate job, but you also know you could have done a lot better! Even if the roof doesn't cave in and your advisees graduate, there are always ways that advising relationships could be improved.

In this presentation, academic advising will be examined from two different perspectives. First, research on the ways in which students' perceptions of advisors' roles change over the course of their academic careers will be presented. In this research, students were asked to rank order and rate the importance of six roles advisors might assume: (1) providing information on university policies and resources to advisees; (2) helping advisees schedule classes and encouraging successful academic progress; (3) assisting advisees in selecting majors and preparing them for jobs or graduate school; (4) helping advisees develop successful learning skills and habits; (5) serving as a role model or mentor for advisees; (6) developing a personal relationship with advisees. Discussion of this research will focus on the overall rankings and importance ratings of these roles, and changes in students' perceptions of advisors' roles from their freshman to senior year. Implications for different approaches to advising students at different stages of their undergraduate careers will be proposed and discussed.

Second, an enhanced advising system that is currently being tested at Baker University will be presented and discussed. The core aspect of this system is a general timetable for advisors to meet with new advisees during their first year of college. Within this framework, advisors meet with advisees four times during the fall semester, once during a January term, and twice during the spring semester. Meetings are strategically planned to occur at "critical" periods during the first college year and to anticipate questions or problems that new students may have during those periods. Discussion of this program will focus on the proposed timetable for meetings, hypothesized questions students may have at different times of the year, and issues on which the meetings might focus in response to these questions.

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Soundings: An Introduction to the Liberal Arts

Victoria Angis, Director of Student Activities
John Gillen, Professor of English
Bill Ramage, Professor of Art

Soundings, a year -long, two-credit, two-part course, was created to provide Castleton State College students with an intellectual and cultural sampling of the liberal arts so that those arts become an integral part of a CSC education and provide enrichment and inspiration for Castleton graduates for the rest of their lives. Soundings has been a requirement for all new students (freshmen and transfers) entering Castleton since 1985.

It is a part of Castleton's mission that our students gain self-awareness and confidence, tolerance for and appreciation of cultural and intellectual diversity, and the ability to think and solve problems creatively. To meet these goals, the College offers a broad foundation in the liberal arts through the Core Curriculum and Soundings.

Soundings is a course without a single classroom or meeting time. It is composed of a series of events offered throughout the academic year. Soundings events may include concerts, films, dances, lectures, workshops, panel discussions and theatre productions. Occasionally a field trip is offered through Soundings. Previous events on the Soundings schedule have included lectures by David Halberstam, Helen Caldicott, and Geraldine Ferraro, and performances by the Preservation Hall Jazz Band and Ballet Nacional de Caracas. Faculty lectures and interactive experiences such as ballroom dancing and mask-making are frequently included on the menu of events.

Each semester Soundings has a "Keystone Event." This event is intended to provide a common, unifying experience to as many members of the entering class as possible--an experience that can be discussed from time to time with classmates and faculty members throughout their undergraduate careers at Castleton. Students are asked to write a response, or reflection, about each Soundings event they attend.

John Gillen, Professor of English and Bill Ramage, Professor of Art are this year's instructors of Soundings. The course is developed by the Cultural Affairs Committee, a standing committee of the Faculty Assembly. Administrative support for the Committee and the course itself is coordinated by the Director of Student Activities, Victoria Angis. Funding is provided by student lab fees and institutional monies.

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WRITING ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Stephen J. Newmann and Katherine M. Fischer

Students often feel that their first year experience is singular to their own corner of the country. In order to stretch their vision, we began this adventure to find out what happens when two first year seminar classes undertake e-journaling (electronic journaling) across the 800 miles from Iowa to Maryland and back. "Writing Across the Country" is a works in progress project between Clarke College in Dubuque, Iowa, and Mount St. Mary's College in Emmitsburg, Maryland. As First Year Seminar teachers from these two small colleges, we have connected the 30 students from our combined classes through the medium of e-mail on the Internet in writing groups of six, three from each school.

The presentation of our project includes the following:

1. Goals of the project
2. Survey results revealing student attitudes toward both paper journals and e-journals
3. Issue clusters discussed by students in journal entries
4. Journal assignments and timeline
5. Practical concerns for teachers collaborating on such a project (from negotiating topics to developing handouts to dealing with students' rights to privacy to determining goals to teaching students e-mail etiquette to determining grading criteria to working with internet technology)
6. Samples of student e-journal entries
7. Evaluation of how the project is successful and what could be done to improve upon it.
8. Questions, answers, comments.

We anticipate that the highlight of the presentation will be

outcomes from the project, that is the reading of entries from student journals on issues like

- Campus Concerns - roommate relationships, commuter life, college policies and the like
- Tolerance and Marginalization - sexism, racism, classism, concerns of sexual preference, multiculturalism
- Global and Local involvements - world and local events involving conscience, volunteer activities, social and political responsibility
- Fitness and Health - exercise, acquaintance rape, eating disorders, Aids, drug and alcohol abuse, and other concerns
- Transitions from High School to College - homesickness, shifts in family and friend relationships.

Since this is the first time we are undertaking the project and since it will be in progress as this conference convenes, we imagine that our presentation will generate a sort of energy drawing participants into the organic nature of our experience.

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PROFILE PORTFOLIO: ASSESSMENT TO IMPROVE STUDENT COMPETENCE

Nan Hackett, Ph.D. **Eunice C. Streufert, Ph.D.**

Student portfolios have become an important means for transferring responsibility for student development from the instructor/advisor (IA) to the student. At Concordia-St. Paul the First Year Seminar has changed significantly to incorporate our ideas of how students can be more actively involved in the course, in their academic advising and in informed life-long decision making. Student advising portfolios are a crucial part of the revised course.

The decision to revise Concordia's First Year Seminar from a more skills-oriented course into a class that stresses information processing came from student and faculty criticism as well as concern about our student make-up. Thirty-nine percent of our freshmen are "practical realists" who learn best from hands-on experience rather than theoretical discussion. Our freshmen classes, reflecting the changing demographics of our society, range from 17% to 20% minority. Approximately 48% of first year students were considered "high risk." Finally, over one-third were first generation college attendees. Obviously, we had a population of students not traditionally predicted to be successful academically. Therefore, an advising portfolio was designed to place responsibility for making decisions about developing study skills, career choices, and social competency on the students themselves (Funk & Bradley, 1994).

The portfolio consists of the results of five instruments commonly used to assess the competency of incoming students: ACT, the Strong Interest Inventory (SSI), the College Student Inventory (CSI), and the Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI). The final item is a writing sample which serves not only to help the student and instructor assess students' writing ability but also to permit students to submit more personal portraits of themselves. We felt the open-ended personal essay was necessary to counter-balance the effect of calculated percentiles and aggregate statistics and to encourage students to speak in authentic voices. The Profile Portfolio allows students to visualize their strengths and weaknesses by reviewing the data collected by these instruments.

So far, the process of assessing students' competence seems no different than the usual number crunching and statistic collecting. However, what is different is that the students own their folders. Students buy the three-ring binder, compile the profiles and store the material for future use rather than passively watching their advisors organize and analyze the data and then dictating how the data will be used. Students are responsible for interpeting the data and for making decisions based on their interpretations. Students receive guidance from instructors and peers so that they do not feel that they have been handed data that predict failure or success no matter what actions they might take.

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For the purposes of the presentation, the implementation strategies of the CSI and LASSI will be discussed. Both IAs and students receive the results of the CSI which was administered during Welcome Week. Students make appointments with their IAs to discuss the data, affirm strengths and set goals to ameliorate weaknesses. The IAs and the students share the responsibility of identifying a concrete goal such as attending study skills workshops, visiting the campus career counseling center, signing up for tutoring, getting involved in more student co-curricular activities, or talking to a personal counselor to improve competence in a specific area of weakness. Each individual student makes a decision based on her or his needs.

There is a second opportunity for students to engage in problem solving to improve competency. Peer advisors (PAs) contact the 16-18 first year students in their sections of the First Year Seminar to share academic and social comfort, get feedback on the LASSI and help their peers design specific measurable strategies to improve competence. PAs help their peers generate alternatives, assess pros and cons of the alternatives, establish the steps needed to implement the strategies and arrange a follow-up session to evaluate progress. This process gives first year students additional support and reminds them they are responsible, not their advisors, not their professors, not their parents nor their peers.

The portfolio provides students with data for self-assessment and self-improvement. The portfolio serves as a means to develop the three key vectors in developmental advising as identified by Frost (1991): competence, autonomy and purpose. Students determine their needs and create strategies to implement their decisions. Together, first year students, PAs and IAs share responsibility for improving student competence.

Participants will be invited to share what parts of the Profile Portfolio they could use and how they would change the Profile Portfolio to meet the needs of their institutions.

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Drury College

MENTORING, COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND ORIENTATION
THE FRESHMAN EXPERIENCE AT DRURY COLLEGE
BIRTH TO FIVE YEARS

CAROLE L. RIESENBERG
DIRECTOR, FRESHMAN EXPERIENCE PROGRAM
DR. GAYLE JENNINGS WOOD, MENTOR
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, COMMUNICATION

Five years ago the freshman program at Drury College, a small, private liberal arts institution in Springfield, Missouri was "born" on July 1, 1990. The initial effort consisted of a mentoring program: twenty faculty members from various disciplines teaching an introductory or freshman level course to a group of thirteen to eighteen freshmen students assigned individually by the director of academic advising during the summer. Registration took place during fall orientation and preparation of schedules in individual advising sessions was the culminating event during orientation. After classes began, the coordinator of the freshman program designed and implemented weekly non-mandatory classes to aid students in the transition from high school to college academics and teach skills necessary for college success. An extended freshman orientation provided opportunities for members of the class to participate in several off-campus activities. A referral system for at-risk students allowed faculty and the coordinator to intervene on behalf of students who needed academic or personal guidance. After six months, a stream of students began to arrive for counseling and this individual exchange and support has remained a strong component of the program. Student self-referral is now the rule rather than the exception.

A strong relationship between the program and faculty at large as well as solid support from students and administration have allowed the program to remain dynamic and evolutionary. The analogy comparing the infant taking first baby steps and the five year old confidently running on the kindergarten playground seem appropriate. The Freshman Experience Program at Drury has become more sophisticated, unified, purposeful as it enters its second generation of existence with the freshman class of 1998.

The current program includes two summer registration sessions, held in June and July, an orientation including community service projects and an introduction to the academic process through classroom experience. Students arrive on campus

for four days of orientation which include a variety of activities designed to enhance academic/social integration, team building, identification of learning skills through classroom discussion, writing, and open exchanges with student leaders. A required summer reading, a compelling convocation speaker, and the community service project all provide focus for a central theme. The mentor classes are the core of the freshman experience. These classes provide a reference group where a student may begin adjustment to the institution and its members, "get comfortable," explore possibilities for selecting a major field of interest, enjoy having a place to be recognized and known, interact with faculty and fellow students in and out of the classroom, and explore fundamental questions in a safe environment. Students are treated to dessert in faculty homes during orientation and each group has numerous (food related,usually!) activities during the academic year. Events such as attending theater productions, films, concerts, exhibitions, as well as playing sand volleyball, pizza parties, breakfast on a Saturday morning, and the continuation of community service projects are not uncommon activities for a mentor group. The mentors report their own satisfaction with the nature of the mentor classes and the enhanced learning environment.

A new freshman course is being developed by a committee of faculty, students and the director of the freshman program. In conjunction with a new general education curriculum, this course will go into effect in the fall of 1995. This new course will bring into focus even more clearly the mission, priorities, and issues of the freshman year.

Data are currently being collected for presentation at the conference. If you would like a copy of the handouts available, contact Carole Riesenberg at the following address:

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Handouts:

Data from Orientation Evaluation Survey
Retention Data
Mentors Talk About the Program
Organizational Plan for Community Service Program
Orientation Schedule
Mentor Handbook (available by request only)
Parent Guide

INDIANA UNIVERSITY
KOKOMO

DIVISION OF
ARTS AND SCIENCES

INDIANA UNIVERSITY KOKOMO SUMMER SUCCESS PROGRAM
Beyond Developmental Education

Presenters: Stuart Green, Linda Newby

In the early 1980s Indiana University Kokomo (IUK) created a developmental curriculum, comprised of non-credit courses in reading, writing, study skills, and mathematics. In 1989, IUK took the next logical step and initiated IUK's Learning Enhancement Center (LEC), a tutoring center for mathematics and writing. Regrettably, after a decade of efforts in remediation, we observed that developmental courses and tutoring programs alone had not overcome the problems faced by underprepared students. Data on the class of 1986 showed our students' rate of graduation after six years was only 20.3%. While not abandoning developmental education for students who clearly need it, we had to look beyond remedial education for more creative and interactive strategies to enhance student success. This session will briefly describe the initial and continuing efforts of IUK's Summer Success Program (SSP). First piloted in 1993 with 24 students, SSP combines an innovative two-course curriculum with an intrusive and focused team of faculty, academic support and student services personnel with one goal: to help underprepared, potential academic failures transform themselves into potential academic successes. After two consecutive successful summer programs, we are piloting our first fall-term "success" program this autumn in a format modified for a sixteen week semester. We also believe this program would be replicable at other similar institutions, namely, public, non-residential four-year colleges and universities.

Attaining a Plateau of Preparation

After consulting with several faculty, administrative, and staff colleagues, who formed an ad hoc advisory board, the Dean of Arts and Sciences and the Coordinator of the Guided Studies Program (GSP is a program for IUK's most underprepared students) created and piloted the Summer Success Program for 24 students in the Summer of 1993. The program's short-term goals were to enable a minimum of 66% of the participating GSP students to achieve readiness for matriculation in the Fall of 1993. In fact, 95% or 23 of the 24 students in our pilot summer program matriculated into the fall semester, an astonishing achievement. We set as a measure of the continuing success of this program for 45% of the students to succeed academically (maintaining a 2.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale) and persist past the first year. 83% of the pilot group advanced registered for the spring term in 1995 and 45% have returned this fall. 100% of the 32 students who participated in Summer Success 1994 have registered for the fall term. In addition, we used the Nelson-Denny reading test to measure the reading levels of our student before and after the program. We observed an average improvement of 1.5 grade levels(this included the data on two learning disabled students). Individual students made remarkable leaps in their reading skills of 3.0, 3.3, 4.0, and even 4.4 grade levels. Data on the second SSP group are comparable. The SSP focused on the following areas of academic readiness: 1) self esteem, 2) writing/thinking skills, 3) collaborative and interpersonal skills, 4) knowledge of institutional personnel, resources, services, and procedures, 5) affinity for the culture of the university, 6) reading skills, and 7) word-processing, library, note taking, and test taking skills. To achieve these objectives we integrated non-credit experiences in writing, reading and study skills, normally taught in stand-alone, fifteen-week courses, with a challenging credit-bearing course in comparative mythology (see description below).

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We recognized the truth of what Levits and Noel had stated: "Because dependent learners are those at the point of entry into college, academic and support services should be concentrated most heavily in the freshman year. Intrusive, proactive strategies must be used to reach freshmen with these services before they have an opportunity to experience feelings of failure, disappointment, and confusion." (Levits and Noel, Connecting Students to Institutions, 1989, p. 79).

Creating a Learning Community

Commuter institutions like IUK find it especially difficult to foster a sense of student connection to the university, what Tinto calls, "Integrating individuals into the mainstream of the social and intellectual life of the institution . . . to establish personal bonds among and between students, faculty and staff." (Tinto, Student Retention, 1990, p. 19). A key strategy that helped us connect our Summer Success students to IUK's learning community was to use advanced students as instructional assistants (IAs) and study-table facilitators in the mythology course. Most important, we recognized that learning takes place both in and outside of the classroom, and involved instructional assistants as mentors in extra-curricular and social settings as well as in study sessions. We also structured a four-day week and a 9:00 to 4:00 daily schedule in an attempt to create a residential or camp-like environment, despite the absence of residence halls or cabins.

The Gateway to the Curriculum: An Interdisciplinary Core

The ACT study on Factors in Loss of Students identifies "academic boredom" as one of the major causes in student attrition. Too many developmental or remedial programs, including IUK's until the initiation of SSP, offer students little academic substance or intellectual challenge. We wanted our students to participate in the mainstream curriculum from the outset of their college experience. We created a comparative mythology course based on the Bill Moyers PBS series, "The Power of Myth," and using Joseph Campbell's text, as an intellectual challenge for our Summer Success students. A three-credit, interdisciplinary, college-level course, it was teamed with a developmental pre-composition course (W031). By design the content in the credit course became the locus for developing writing skills in W031. Because our students are video literate, we used not only the PBS videos, but included other popular videos along with an extensive reading list in mythology, theatre, literature, anthropology, folklore, and children's literature. Students read Oedipus and also watched Star Wars and Rain Man, films rich with mythological undertones. Whether reading or viewing, or exploring museum exhibits, students were engaged in the discovery of mythic influences in both popular and high culture. Thus, the mythology course served as the gateway both to the larger college curriculum and to a broader, multicultural view of human culture.

Esteem Building

By involving SSP students with faculty, staff, and advanced students, the SSP students learn to see themselves as important to the university. Their new connection to the academic culture enhances their currency as individuals and their sense of self worth. We end each program with a concluding ceremony that is celebratory and emotional. As students receive their certificates program completion, a dry eye can't be found.

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THE FIRST-YEAR STUDENT-ATHLETE: EXAMINING PERSISTENCE RATES AT KENTUCKY WESLEYAN COLLEGE

James E. Welch, Associate Professor
Kentucky Wesleyan College

Abstract

As each academic year begins, thousands of first-time college students make the transition from high school to the unique environment of higher education. Probably no first-year students have greater personal demands placed on them than the first-year student-athletes. Unlike nonstudent-athletes, these individuals must additionally adjust to a new coach's expectations, new teammates, and the change from "star" status to being one of many outstanding performers (Farwell, 1983). Add to this, "The Myth of the Student-Athlete" which is founded in the notion that student-athletes study and train hard and are rewarded for their efforts, not with money, but with sporting values and, above all, an education (Brownlee & Linnon, 1990). This myth is undermined by the psychological and economical necessity, past and present, to WIN.

Colleges and universities, for reasons of institutional integrity, must deal with an appropriate balance between academics and athletics. If institutions of higher education do not, they leave themselves open for criticism concerning the exploitation or abuse of student-athletes (Ryan, 1989). According to the Knight Commission report (1991), "The first consideration on a university campus must be academic integrity. They (student-athletes) should not be considered for enrollment at a college or university unless they give reasonable promise of being successful at that institution in a course of study leading to an academic degree. Their academic performance should be measured by the same criteria applied to other students". In addition, this first year is crucial because the quality of the overall college experience impacts on the achievement of subsequent academic and athletic goals (Terenzini, Pacarella, & Lorang, 1982). At many colleges and universities, student-athletes eligible in their first semester remain athletically eligible throughout the year regardless of their academic performance in that first term. If at the end of the first year, a student-athlete finds him/herself in trouble academically, the individual is also in trouble ath-

letically. All too often, faced with this duel problem, the student-athlete chooses not to return to the campus for a second year.

This study used surveys, personal interviews, and secondary sources to examine the following question: *"What factors influenced the nonpersistence of first-year student-athletes at Kentucky Wesleyan College?"*. This inquiry was broken down into three parts: In the first part, admissions and registrar data were examined, in the second part, results of a survey questionnaire was analyzed, and in the third part, interviews with first-year student-athletes were used to enhance the survey responses. The research was designed so as to examine the relationship between biographical characteristics, factors for admission, financial aid, academic, and athletic performance for selected groups of first-year student-athletes as they relate to student persistence. Like all studies, this study has its own limitations (ie. small student population and lack of racial diversity). Also, it is important to understand that this study was designed to be used by Kentucky Wesleyan College to draw some conclusions as to how the institution can best retain first-year student-athletes. While the findings of this study may hold some benefits for other similar colleges, it was not the intention to make any claim of universality.

It was believed that the findings of this study would help in developing a profile of the at-risk first-year student-athlete, and to find some of the reasons why members of this group do not continue at Kentucky Wesleyan College. However, it became apparent that, while athletics must improve their persistence rates, male nonathletes have almost as much to work on to improve their persistence rate. According to Levitz and Noel (1988), retention success is an important factor in recruitment. Students who become dissatisfied and leave school are not likely to recommend that institution to their friends back home. The viability of the college hinges on a satisfied student population. The more satisfying the college experience, the better an alumnus the college should have. With a stronger alumni support group, the institution should find it easier to fund short-term academic and athletic endeavors, as well as, long-term commitments to endowment and scholarship. Therefore, it is important for colleges and universities to develop programs that increase student persistence on their campus. The development of a quality student persistence program begins with a profile of the student at-risk of not returning. Even with the stated limitations, this study has realize some of its desired outcomes. At a minimum, the inquiry has provided a data base for a second research project. The targeted individuals, first-year student-athletes, in this study provided a considerable amount of information that provided a better understanding of this important group.

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Developing the F.I.R.S.T. Program

Michelle Ballew

The goal of the Freshmen In Residence Student Training (F.I.R.S.T.) program was to develop a residential based program to address the developmental and cultural needs and concerns of the first year resident student at Keuka College. The focus of this program was to ease and facilitate the enculturation of first year students into the Keuka College community, to saturate the residential environment with vehicles designed to ease freshman transition, to address developmental issues directly related to the first year student, and to improve the quality of life for freshmen. The successful outcome of this program will be increased retention rates of freshmen students at Keuka College. This session will focus on how this program was developed at Keuka College. It will also look at how the implementation has fared this year.

Mankato
STATE UNIVERSITY

Counseling and Student Personnel

The Relationship Between Gender and Student Outcomes in a Freshman Seminar Course

Presenter: Anne Blackhurst, Ph.D.

Abstract

As educators implement freshman seminar courses in an effort to enhance the success of first-year students, outcomes assessment plays a key role in evaluating the effectiveness of current programs and making improvements designed to meet students' developmental needs. Outcomes studies have demonstrated that one of the important factors affecting students' development during the first year of college is gender. Studies have also demonstrated the significance of a faculty or staff mentor to both the personal development and the academic achievement of first-year students. Little research has been done, however, to examine the affect of gender on these important mentoring relationships.

This session will address the relationship between gender and student outcomes in a freshman seminar course. Specifically, the session will examine: 1) the relationship between students' gender and their psychosocial development and academic achievement during the first semester of college; and 2) the relationship between the seminar instructor's gender and first-year students' psychosocial development and academic achievement.

The focus of the session will be research conducted at Marietta College, an independent, co-educational, liberal arts college with an enrollment of approximately 1,100 full-time students. Since the early 1980s, Marietta College has offered a seminar for first-year students. Required of all students since 1991, the seminar addresses: 1) the transition to college; 2) study skills; 3) group building; 4) communication skills; and 5) theme study. The seminar instructor also serves as the academic advisor for the students in her/his seminar section.

In the fall of 1993, nine sections of the seminar participated in an outcomes study designed to examine the influence of the seminar on students' psychosocial development and academic achievement during the first semester of college. Three sections of the seminar were taught by male instructors, three were taught by female instructors, and three were team-taught by both a male and a female instructor. A stratified random sample of 180 first-year students was selected from the entering class of approximately 350 students, and equal numbers of male and female students were assigned to each of the nine seminar sections participating in the study.

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The Student Developmental Task and Lifestyle Inventory (SDTLI) was administered to all students in the study on both the first and last days of class. The SDTLI, which measures certain aspects of Chickering's theory of psychosocial development, was used to assess students' development in the areas of purpose, mature interpersonal relationships, and academic autonomy. Students' first semester grade point averages were utilized as a measure of academic achievement.

The research data was utilized to compare male and female students' psychosocial development and academic achievement during the first semester of college. In addition, the study compared the psychosocial development and academic achievement of students in six treatment groups, which examined the effects of being taught by an instructor of the same sex, an instructor of the other sex, or a mixed-sex team of instructors.

This session will present the results of the study and discuss the implications of the findings for practice and future research. Participants will be provided with copies of the instrument utilized in the study, the results of statistical analyses conducted on the research data, and an annotated bibliography of literature related to gender and the first-year experience. Time will also be allotted for participants to share the results of similar studies on their own campuses.

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Marietta College

Chartered in 1835

" To lead is to enliven and sustain partnerships for the sake of reducing harm and enhancing the common Life"

Gregg and John Sullivan

Dr. Michelle Daniels, Vice President for Student Life/Dean of Students
Roseanne Gill-Jacobson, Associate Dean of Students

Marietta College's department of Residence Life adopted the aforementioned definition of leadership during the 1994 fall training. In an effort to build community housing units from the residence halls, the staff struggled with a definition until the above quote was used. But how do you build community with 800 students all going in opposite directions? That is the questions that we are answering at Marietta as we attempt to educate leaders one at a time. From the classroom to the lounges of residence halls, Marietta is looking at leadership opportunities with renewed vigor.

The search for community will begin with staff selection this fall. Candidates for resident assistants must take a leadership course before final selections are made. Readings for the course include excepts from Gardner's On Leadership, Greenleaf's Servant Leadership, and Lappe and Du Bois, Quickening of America. By studying the above mentioned material, resident assistants begin to understand what we mean by the question "What kind of Community do you want to live in?" The community theme will continue during resident assistant training as the R.A.'s will go through parts of the McDonough Leadership orientation. Follow-up sessions will include resident assistants running town meetings for their halls, and other in-service training.

Once students arrive on campus, hall meetings are called to set community standards. A standards board and a hall council will be chosen by the residents. The board will be charged with hearing violations of community standards and the hall council will serve as an in hall governing board with representation on the Student Senate.

In November members of the faculty, staff, and students will meet for a weekend retreat to formulate an action plan on building community throughout campus. A portion of this plan will focus on residence halls. After returning to campus, town meetings will be set to get community input from all of it's members.

Currently, various instruments are being designed for the evaluation of these programs. We look forward to the implications that community will bring to campus, and the positive changes that will result from our students taking ownership for the community in which they live.

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Marietta College
Chartered in 1835

"Freshman Seminar Revisited: Thirteen Years Later"

William C. Hartel, Professor of History and Co-Director of the Freshman Year
Fred Voner, Associate Professor of Geology and Co-Director of the Freshman Year

A comparison of Marietta College's Freshman Experience course when it was first introduced in 1981 with the College Experience Seminar as part of the general education requirement for all students in 1994. From an experimental two sections in 1981 the course has gone through many changes which reflects not only the politics of freshman transition courses but also the changing perceived needs of students, faculty, and the institution in general. Examples of successes as well as failures will highlight the session.

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Utilizing Peer Mentors to Enhance the Freshmen Year Experience for At Risk Freshmen

LaurieBeth Hager
Freshmen Mentoring Coordinator
Student Support Services Counselor
Mayville State University
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Abstract

Mayville State University is a small rural public college located in eastern North Dakota. It has an enrollment of 750 students who are primarily from rural farming communities and exhibit a variety of at risk characteristics. Mayville State established a peer mentoring program in 1991 to address the needs of its at risk freshmen.

The FRIEND/BEFRIENDer Program (Freshmen Reaching out In Exciting New Directions and Buddies Encouraging FRIENDs) matches BEFRIENDers with incoming at risk freshmen. Following six weeks of training, BEFRIENDers conduct one on one weekly mentoring sessions with their assigned freshmen (FRIENDs). During these mentoring sessions, BEFRIENDers provide information to show the new students the ropes of college and to guide them through their freshmen year.

Peer mentor selection is based upon faculty and peer recommendations, grade point average, and desire to assist a freshmen. Peer mentors are trained regarding freshmen issues, communication and interpersonal skills, and rapport building. Identification of at risk freshmen is through a self report process and also with the use of the Noel Levitz retention management program. Eligibility is based upon risk characteristics with priority for freshmen with three of the following risk characteristics:

hometown distance greater than 200 miles, minority students, first generation status, athletes, associate degree seekers, undecided majors, and students who appear to be weak academically. Recently the Noel Levitz Retention Management System has also been implemented as a predictor of freshmen who are at risk.

The development of the relationship between the FRIEND and BEFRIENDer is initiated prior to the freshmen's arrival on campus through a phone contact. Once on campus the FRIENDs meet their assigned BEFRIENDer and the other BEFRIENDers and the following weekend everyone attends a weekend retreat. At the retreat, freshmen participate in activities which will build rapport, encourage teamwork, develop group cohesiveness, and provide opportunities for personal success.

One indicator used to measure the effectiveness of the program is the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (Baker and Siryk, 1989). This instrument measures academic adjustment, social adjustment, personal emotional adjustment, attacthment and overall adaptation. Preliminary results from past research indicates that freshmen participating in the peer mentoring program score higher on the general scale and on the attachment scale of the instrument than students in the control group who are not participating in the program. The second indicator are the attrition statistics indicate that participation in the FRIEND/BEFRIENDer program is an effective retention strategy.

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EARLY Academic Warning

Dr. Thomas J. Rookey

Retention has become a major concern in every college. Our program has developed around the idea that capable students get into trouble early so the college has to react quickly and intrusively to save them.

The college has studied who leaves and stays. They come from the same molds for the most part but some traits do indicate "high risk".

We developed a learner contract which has evolved into two different contracts: Learner and Probationary. These "must sign" contracts force a risk student to use the assistance offices, interact with their advisor, and attend classes. Follow up and the determination to enforce the threat are necessary.

Since attendance is a critical factor in failure, our team developed a monitor and react system. We record attendance then react to absenteeism at the third and sixth classes of both day and evening students. We've learned to involve a wide array of people.

Our traditional mid-semester academic warning was ineffective so we implemented a new format and a new routing.

Academic Standards have to be directly related to the warning and contract system. The academic counselors and advisors were integrated into the actions taken in response to Standards.

Our advising was expanded beyond our current practice of 20 students advised by one faculty. We broke out special subgroups with designated advisors and created a Freshman Class advisor.

Finally, the freshman learning skills course was revamped so that an adult version offered at night was substantially different.

All of these developments were focused on increasing retention by controlling failure through early, intrusive action.

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MERCER UNIVERSITY
STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Two Highly Successful Programs for High Risk College Freshmen in a Small University Setting.

Michol M. Hite, Ed.D.

Two programs which were initiated in the fall quarter, 1993 resulted in an outstanding success for the freshmen students involved. The first program is a specially designed, 10-day intensive pre-school experience for identified high risk in-coming freshmen. Created to provide a positive head start, the program's goals involve fifty students participating in academic, social and emotional learning experiences that result in higher grade point averages than had been traditionally made by this type of student. The learning opportunities were to also increase the retention rate for these students. The academic and retention results proved greater than anticipated. The statistical report of G.P.A.'s, retention and overall evaluation of the program will be discussed.

The second intervention, also initiated in fall, '93 is the use of contracts. Referred to as "Life Contracts," these commitments from the students, significant family members and the counselor, describe the involvement required from each participant in order for the student to have an opportunity for success. This program has the same qualities as that of the pre-orientation experience. Detailed information concerning the development, implementation, and results of this program will take place.

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METHODIST COLLEGE

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A LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT MODEL

Susan Bauers-Joslin

Nebraska Methodist College has a history of holistic life skill development with its students. Such development in the collegiate setting is considered necessary for human beings to gain a desire for life-long self growth, to thrive in today's complex society, and to be a positive influence in the community. This history has been created through an overriding collegiate belief in holistic life skill development which is reflected within the institutional mission and core values statements. The evolution of the Life Skills Development Model has been a significant factor in this history. This model provides a foundation and a framework for comprehensive student development efforts. It serves as a guiding force for all programming and services on campus and, as well, provides a framework for enhanced curricular infusion of life skills. The developmental components of the model are as follows:

1. ***Inner Self***
2. ***Cognitive Skills***
3. ***Communication Skills***
4. ***Productive Relationships***
5. ***Life Management Skills***
6. ***Community Spirit***

The model flows from the College's mission and core values and has, through the years, influenced what the mission and core values have become. This philosophy and the model have evolved to their current state of maturation through the continued growth of College professional staff, faculty, and administration, through continued contact with and assessment of students and graduates, and through continued study of several bodies of literature.

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NICOLET AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE

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Serving the Freshman Adult Commuter Student

Dr. Tom Eckert
Mr. John Seefeld
Ms. Susan Kordula

The freshman who is an adult and who commutes to campus presents a challenge to service providers in higher education. This student group is often burdened with multiple role responsibilities that allow very little time for campus activities or student services beyond very basic needs. Additional services (important workshops, seminars, cultural activities) are often unattended. This does not imply a lack of interest as much as a lack of time on the part of these students. It's important that freshman adult commuter students receive all the service benefits possible, and innovative methods must be implemented to provide these services. Without them, students do not receive a full educational experience and may miss essential information that could mean the difference between success and failure. It may also mean that they do not receive the benefit of events and programming intended for the development of the "whole student."

Increasingly, campus personnel are concerned about development of the whole student. Faculty and student services staff are seeking to instill in students certain "core abilities." For instance, Nicolet College has developed the goal of having each of its graduates acquire eight core abilities: high self-esteem; solid foundations skills (reading, writing, study skills); effective communication; critical thinking; program competence; self-directed inquiry and growth; community commitment; and global awareness and sensitivity. Many of these abilities will be addressed within the classroom, but many of them require additional activities and programming outside the classroom . The difficulty then becomes providing these services to adults who want to get on and off the campus as quickly as possible.

Research also tells us that students who connect with the campus and the educational environment that has been created, tend to have a better chance of completing. It is important to help students get this connection. The freshman adult who commutes, however, tends not to connect easily and may not even desire to become involved with the campus community. Again, they want to get on and off the campus as quickly as possible even though it may hinder their development as students.

NICOLET IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

The presenters of this program are seeking new and innovative methods to serve the freshman adult commuter student more effectively, and wish, therefore, to facilitate a sharing/ brainstorming session on serving this population. We would like participants to share successful programs and practices (the presenters would begin the process) and then brainstorm together ways to improve services to this group. We will provide a note taker and will mail the final product of the session to all who attend. We will also create a "participant list" for those wishing to form a network to continue the dialogue.

All too often we try to force adult students into traditional-student-based services that work poorly or not at all. It is hoped this session will generate a number of service practices that directly meet the needs of this population. We are anxious to share with participants the programs we have found successful at Nicolet and hope others will join us to share and brainstorm ideas we can all use to help this unique group of students.

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The PARTNERSHIP FOR SERVICE-LEARNING

Academic Institutions and Service Agencies Uniting Learning and Service

SERVICE-LEARNING: THE FRESHMAN YEAR AND BEYOND

PRESENTER: HOWARD A. BERRY

Service-learning — the union of academic studies with community service — has deservedly achieved widespread visibility and popularity. President Clinton's national service initiative has encouraged many colleges and universities to implement, sometimes hastily, service-learning experiences for their students.

For those who have long seen and experienced the powerful pedagogical and epistemological implications of service-learning for general and liberal education these developments have been gratifying.

For the freshman year experience particularly service-learning may hold much potential. Students come to college and university with a variety of expectations and needs. That teaching and learning will be different. That they will be able to be active participants in their own education. That they will be able to encounter and test themselves and their values in the larger community and world in ways that contribute to their emerging maturity, identity and sense of self-worth.

Service-learning, while not a panacea, has the potential to help students and academic institutions realize these expectations and needs. To achieve this potential, however, there are some principles basic to successful implementation of service-learning as a coherent and intentional edcuational strategy.

One is that service-learning need not be seen as an internship with the service and the learning framed narrowly and directly. Service-learning opportunities should be available across the curriculum, not limited to one course, discipline or department. Service-learning has value for all students and all disciplines. With faculty imagination many disciplines can be brought to bear on the same service situation.

A second is that the goals of existing and basic disciplines can be achieved through the infusion of service-learning. Faculty can be encouraged to explore new ways of teaching and learning which enhance and enliven traditional studies, and which address issues of critical thinking by allowing students to test classroom theory against the observations they make in their service experience.

A third is that the service performed should be substantive and meaningful. Service related to a single course can take place only 3-4 hours per week. This is neither substantive nor meaningful service either to the community agency or the student.

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If, however, a number of courses have the capacity to recognize the dimensions of learning which can take place from a single service situation, students can take these courses simultaneously, satisfy each by shaping their learning for each discipline, and as a result perform 12-15 hours of service per week. This now provides the agency with a valuable volunteer, and the student with a meaningful experience.

A related result of this pattern is that the students are brought to see disciplines not as fragmented bodies of knowledge but as varied, related ways of viewing and interpreting the world and society.

Fourth, there should be a component allowing regular structured and shared reflection on the service experience by students. This reflection should be in addition to the formal learning related to disciplines. Its purpose is to provide for the important and often powerful developmental and values growth which students undergo through community service.

Such an institutional, coherent basis for service-learning provides a crucial possibility to realize the full potential of service-learning for students. Through such a structure students would be able to increase both their academic and service involvement and engagement year by year.

They might, for example, in their freshman year begin with one or two courses and 4-6 hours of service per week. In the second year this might increase to three or four courses and 6-8 hours of service. By the third year they would be ready for full-time involvement in studies and service, perhaps in the form of an off-campus or international service experience.

This pattern of cascading, increasing involvement in active learning and community service would provide increasing academic skills and enlarged capacity for genuine and substantive service.

Thus the freshman year, through the experience of service, can become foundational to the coherence of the experience of general education. In it habits of thinking, learning, values and community involvement are formed. If increasing levels of study and service are allowed throughout the college experience, the freshman year might take on new meaning.

Through the thread of service-learning it would become connected to a totality of educational development and growth. Students would find new connections to learning, faculty find new connections to their disciplines, and academic institutions find new connections to community and the world.

PINE MANOR COLLEGE
Student Affairs

The Co-Curriculum as Curriculum: Conversations Among Campus Constituencies in a First-Year Seminar

Presenters: Kathy Jonas, Stephen Thompson

Abstract:

At Pine Manor College we are redesigning our "first-year seminar" to be a more collaborative enterprise involving several campus constituencies. The seminar is jointly planned by student affairs and academic affairs staff. While it employs various formats, the course often involves some sort of a presentation followed by small group discussions. The small group discussions are led by members of the residential life/student affairs staff, assisted by peer advisors. (Each first-year student is assigned a peer advisor; each peer advisor is assigned a cohort of 5 or 6 advisees to whom she offers co-curricular and curricular advice). Each first-year student responds to the seminar material (lectures, presentations, discussions, etc.) by keeping a regular journal (a sort of thinking out loud on paper) which is read by her discussion leader and her peer advisor. Because the seminar carries academic credit, while being "taught" by residential life/student affairs staff and peer advisors, it validates the educational importance of extra-classroom conversations: it grants curricular status to the co-curricular.

Our first-year seminar further seeks to connect the co-curriculum with the curriculum by addressing co-curricular topics such as conflict and conflict resolution, women's health and well being, as well as concerns that link the co-curriculum with the curriculum, such as various learning styles and strategies, and multiculturalism and diversity. Whenever possible, presentations are delivered by members of the administration, faculty, or staff (i.e. the Vice President for Financial Affairs discussing time management; a grant writer talking about alcohol abuse; an Associate Director of Admissions discussing aquaintance rape). Using "in house" talent in this way serves three purposes: a.) it aquaints first-year students with individual members of the college community they might not otherwise have occasion to meet; b.) it begins to show first-year students (and some of the rest of us, we must admit) how various aspects of the College's administrative structure articulate with one another.; c.) most importantly, it dramatizes that the topics addressed by the first-year seminar involve genuine issues that many different people in a variety of roles deal with, and that there is much we can learn from sharing our attitudes and experiences with each other.

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The first-year seminar at Pine Manor College is being planned and organized around the conviction that the co-curriculum and the curriculum are a seamless web; that one learns as much from conversations and interactions outside of the classroom as inside it. By building the first-year seminar around involving various members of the College community in conversations with first-year students regarding issues of mutual concern, we are encouraging the entire campus community to make an investment in, and feel some ownership of, the seminar; and by awarding academic credit for the seminar, we are validating the educational significance of these conversations. We are moving toward a greater sense of shared educational mission: the entire campus as a collaborative learning community, which is what, at its best, a small college is suited to be. Instead of co-curriculum and curriculum, we are trying to think in terms of curricula, and to focus our attention and energy on how to better intergrate these curricula into a coherent campus experience.

Center for Academic Development

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Supplemental Instruction: Improving First-Year Student Success in High Risk Courses

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Metropolitan Area Schools Project
816 235-5405

Student-Athletic Academic Support
816 235-1164

Supplemental Instruction (National Dissemination)
816 235-1166

Supplemental Instruction (UMKC Program)
816 235-1313

Upward Bound
816 235-1115

Developed by the University of Missouri at Kansas City, Supplemental Instruction (SI) is an academic assistance program that increases student performance and retention. The SI program targets traditionally difficult academic courses--those that have a high percentage rate of D or F grades and withdrawals--and provides regularly scheduled, out-of-class, peer facilitated sessions. SI does not identify high-risk students, but rather identifies high-risk classes.

Assistance begins the first week of the term. During the first class session, the SI Leader describes SI and surveys the class to establish a schedule for SI that will be convenient for most students who show interest. From these surveys, the SI leader schedules three or more SI sessions per week. SI sessions occur in classrooms near the course classroom instead of in a learning center. SI sessions are open to all students in the course and attendance is on a voluntary basis. SI leaders are students who have demonstrated competence in this or a comparable course. SI sessions are composed of students of varying abilities and no effort is made to segregate students based on academic ability. Since SI is introduced on the first day of classes and is open to all students in the class, SI is not viewed as remedial.

National research studies over the past decade from 146 institutions (2,875 college courses) document the following benefits for SI attendees: higher course grades (one-half to one full letter grade), a lower percentage of course withdrawals, higher semester re-enrollment rates, and higher graduation rates.

The SI Leaders are the key people in the program. They are presented as model "students of the subject." As such, they present an appropriate model of thinking, organization and mastery of the discipline. All SI Leaders take part in an intensive two day training session before the beginning of the academic term. This training covers such topics as how students learn as well as instructional strategies aimed at strengthening student academic

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performance, data collection and management details. SI Leaders attend all class sessions, take notes, read all assigned material, and conduct three or more 50-minute SI sessions each week. The SI session integrates "how-to-learn" with "what-to-learn." Students who attend the SI session discover appropriate application of study strategies, e.g., note taking, graphic organization, questioning techniques, vocabulary acquisition, and test preparation, as they review content material. Students have the opportunity to become actively involved in the course material as the SI leaders use the text, supplementary readings, and lecture notes as the vehicle for learning skill instruction.

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The SI Supervisor, an on-site professional staff person, implements and supervises the SI program. This person is responsible for identifying the targeted courses, gaining faculty support, selecting and training SI Leaders, monitoring the quality of the SI session, and evaluating the program. The SI Leaders meet as a group with the SI Supervisor at least three times during the term for follow-up and problem-solving.

SI students earn higher course grades and fewer withdrawals than non-SI participants. Also, data demonstrate higher re-enrollment and graduation rates. Faculty and staff from nearly 400 institutions from the U.S. and abroad have been trained to implement SI.

In the early 1980's, and again in 1991, the SI model was certified as an Exemplary Educational Program by the U.S. Department of Education. Since that time, the University has received grants through the National Diffusion Network, a division of the U.S. Department of Education, to help other colleges and universities implement the model.

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University of San Diego

College of Arts & Sciences Office of the Dean

Sustaining Faculty Support for a Freshmen Preceptorial Program: The Challenges of a Mature Program

Mitchell R. Malachowski
Associate Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Designing an advising program, generating campus-wide support for it and implementing the program require an enormous expenditure of time and resources. After this initial surge of activity and interest, the risk is to assume that the program is self-sustaining; this is a common ailment of faculty who have been involved in the program for a number of years. This scenario can lead to stagnation, loss of interest by advisors and ultimately a gradual decline in the quality of advising and student-faculty interactions.

The University of San Diego designed a freshmen preceptorial program during the late 1970's in response to a serious attrition problem. This program currently involves forty-six faculty who each teach a class of 12-18 students during each fall semester and act as the students' advisor until they declare a major. This program has reached a mature level and is generally viewed as a success; as such it is highly touted by the admissions office, the development office and public relations as a shining example of our personalized approach to students. Structurally the program is sound, however, as its director I see the warts which have developed over time. When the faculty and students connect in these courses the experience for both is truly first-rate; when they don't we put our students at great academic risk.

Ultimately, the success of the preceptorial program is dependent on the energy and expertise of the faculty involved. This presentation will describe the goals of our program and the methods we use to assist our faculty in making it successful. Attributes in the three areas which all successful advising programs must have: selection of advisors, compensation or recognition, and

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assessment will be explored and features which are general in scope and transferable to other institutions will be discussed.

In addition to the above characteristics, a discussion of our most recent attempts to increase support for the program will be addressed. These include additional academic components added to orientation, focus groups, common readings sent to all incoming students and a preceptorial mentor pilot project. This mentor plan involves linking the preceptorial program with our campus-wide effort to increase cultural diversity. As part of a grant from the Irvine Foundation, we have selected eight preceptors for additional training, compensation and resources to assist them in working with their students. This faculty development effort meshes well with the University's goals and mission, but is also a response to the frustration of working with some preceptors who resist efforts to enhance their interactions with students. The goal of the pilot project is to help the selected faculty become better preceptors and to have them serve as mentors to other faculty currently in the program or considering joining it. Preliminary results will be displayed and critiqued and suggestions solicited.

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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

THE FRESHMAN YEAR EXPERIENCE

UNIVERSITY 101
NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER

Models of Innovations and Exploration: Freshman Seminars on Small Campuses

Betsy Barefoot
Co-Director for Research and Publications
National Resource Center for The Freshman Year Experience

Freshman seminars on American campuses are a diverse group of courses designed for many purposes and intending many outcomes. But the most creative and innovative freshman seminars are generally found on small campuses. Using quantitative and qualitative data from the most recent national survey of freshman seminars, this presentation will provide information on the many ways such courses are being implemented in small liberal arts colleges, their common as well as their distinguishing features. Participants will be encouraged to share ideas, concerns, and questions about developing and/or maintaining a freshman seminar that both conforms to the unique mission and purpose of an institution and meets the needs of entering students.

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FROM ORIENTATION TO ADVISING: THE EIGHT-WEEK FRESHMAN SEMINAR

Boyd Creasman
Alice Leigh

In 1992, West Virginia Wesleyan College inaugurated its Freshman Seminar program, in which seminar leaders (mostly faculty) and upper-level student leaders convene their seminar groups of fifteen to twenty first-year students during Orientation and then meet with them an hour each week for eight weeks, at which time freshmen are assigned advisors from their respective majors. The weekly sessions are designed to encourage meaningful connections among students, who sharpen communication skills while exploring college issues and clarifying their educational goals. We believe that Freshman Seminar makes the transition to college smoother, offers a forum for sharing ideas, provides interim advising, and builds a sense of community among first-year students. Students are graded Pass/Fail and earn one semester hour of credit if they pass the course. Seminar leaders are paid a modest stipend, but most find the interaction with students most rewarding.

The process begins with Orientation, during which students meet with their seminar leader and student leaders, who assist them with registration and with any questions they might have about financial aid, housing, meal plans, and books. In addition, Orientation provides relaxed social and recreational activities for students to become better acquainted with each other and with their seminar leader.

The objectives of the Freshman Seminar are as follows:

1. To make incoming freshmen's transition to college life a smooth one by providing them with opportunities to interact with faculty and other students, including upperclassmen.

2. To enhance the students' basic knowledge of the services, facilities and functions of Wesleyan, such as the library, general studies requirements, academic probation, the Honors Program, etc.

3. To provide interim academic advising.

4. To encourage the students to explore their purposes in attending college and to help them articulate goals for the next four years and beyond.

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5. To enhance the students' understanding of the importance of the role of critical thinking and written and oral communication of ideas.

6. To provide a forum for discussion of student concerns, personal issues and current events.

7. To collect student suggestions for useful activities.

Attendance, participation, and two 500-word essays are the only course requirements. The first essay asks the students to articulate educational goals; the second essay evolves from class discussion.

The course is structured as follows. Session 1 is devoted to defining course objectives, explaining academic policies, and evaluating Orientation. Students and their leaders are responsible for generating topics for discussion during Sessions 2-5. Some groups focus on college issues such as study skills, diversity and alcohol consumption. Others focus on political issues or popular culture. The main requirement of seminar leaders is that they encourage discussion and invite student input. Session 6 is devoted to verifying the students' majors and asking for their preference of advisor and to their filling out the Freshman Survey, which includes questions about the college and their beliefs and values. During Session 7, students attend departmental meetings to meet faculty, find out more about their majors, and learn about activities and organizations related to their field of study. Session 8 is devoted to reviewing the results of Freshman Survey, to assigning them a time in which to meet their departmental advisors, and to evaluating Freshman Seminar.

By encouraging small group discussion and essay writing, our program builds a greater sense of community among the students and emphasizes the importance of communication skills for success in college. While it cannot substitute for more elaborate three-hour programs at some institutions, the Freshman Seminar program at West Virginia Wesleyan College provides a cost-efficient alternative for small colleges that are concerned with enhancing student interaction, clarifying student goals, emphasizing the importance of writing and speaking skills, and improving retention numbers.

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ADAPTING A DEVELOPMENTAL FIRST-YEAR SEMINAR TO ADDRESS ISSUES OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Stuart B. Tennant, Ph.D.
Vice President for Student Affairs

Several years ago the presenter developed a Freshman Colloquium entitled "Young Adulthood: The College Experience." In the initial first-year seminar he used psycho-social theory as a base, specifically, Chickering's first four vectors of development, and Erikson's concept of identity formation. As Chickering suggests, the stage of "young adulthood" (17-24 years) between the developmental stages of adolescence and adulthood, is that time when young adults reformulate their sense of self. According to the theorist, traditional college freshmen (17-19 years) are Developing Competence, Managing Emotions and Developing Autonomy. The result of students working "through" these issues, or developmental tasks, is that they redefine themselves to an extent that differs from the sense of self they may have had prior to matriculating to college (Establishing Identity).

Initially the presenter looked at the literature of college experience--e.g., "Of This Time, Of That Place" (Trilling); "In the Region of Ice" (Oates); "College: DePauw" (Mead) and "Chapter One" from Sophie's Choice (Styron), in order to present fictional young adults who would be seen engaging in the very kinds of developmental issues that the theory base alluded to. Thus, for example, Chickering's 3rd and 4th vectors, Developing Autonomy and Establishing Identity, can be clarified by observing Styron's fictional narrator, Stingo, wrestling with the choice of remaining in his "publishing mill" editing position or breaking away and attempting to make it on his own as a writer.

Subsequently, the presenter adapted his selections from literature so that an African-American experience might be encountered. As a result, "Notes of a Native Son" (Baldwin); "Everyday Use" (Walker), I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings (Angelou), and "1965" (from Autobiography of Malcom X) replaced the earlier literary selections. Whereas Oates' story "In the Region of Ice" had been earlier used to illustrate issues of stress and anxiety (the troubled student, Allen Weinstein, ends his turmoil by committing suicide); Baldwin's "Notes of a Native Son" (in which the author shares the emotional turmoil in experiencing both his father's death and the concomitant racial violence and prejudice his father's life and death encapsulated) was used to illustrate stress and anxiety from an African-American perspective. Likewise,

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relevant psychosocial research, such as that of Branch-Simpson (1984), which studied Black students' engagement in psychosocial developmental tasks, was incorporated.

Currently the presenter is adapting the original developmental model to reflect a Native American perspective. This is being done in part to address a concern that the presenter is not himself African-American (he does, happily, have Native American lineage) and to broaden the scope of the seminar to include cultures other than Caucasian or African-American. Thus, works such as I Heard the Owl Call My Name, White Elk Speaks, and Ceremony are being culled to form a Native American "Reader," similar to the readers developed for the earlier two colloquia. Again, as with the African-American colloquium, differences in how Native American students engage in developmental tasks and identity formation are being addressed. For instance, Native American students, as well as African-American students, tend to formulate their identity in relation to their families, while white students have typically sought to break away from their families emotionally in order to assert their own sense of identity.

The presenter's thesis is that there is enough "common ground" when examining the developmental tasks of young adults engaged in identity formation to include cultural differences. A first-year seminar instructor can, therefore, adapt the literary content of a seminar so as to acknowledge the distinct perspectives of cultures other than the Euro-centric view that has pervaded the Academy. By including other cultural perspectives, the instructor can both honor the cultural heritage of those "culturally different" students taking the seminar and broaden the awareness of those majority students who elect to take the course as well.

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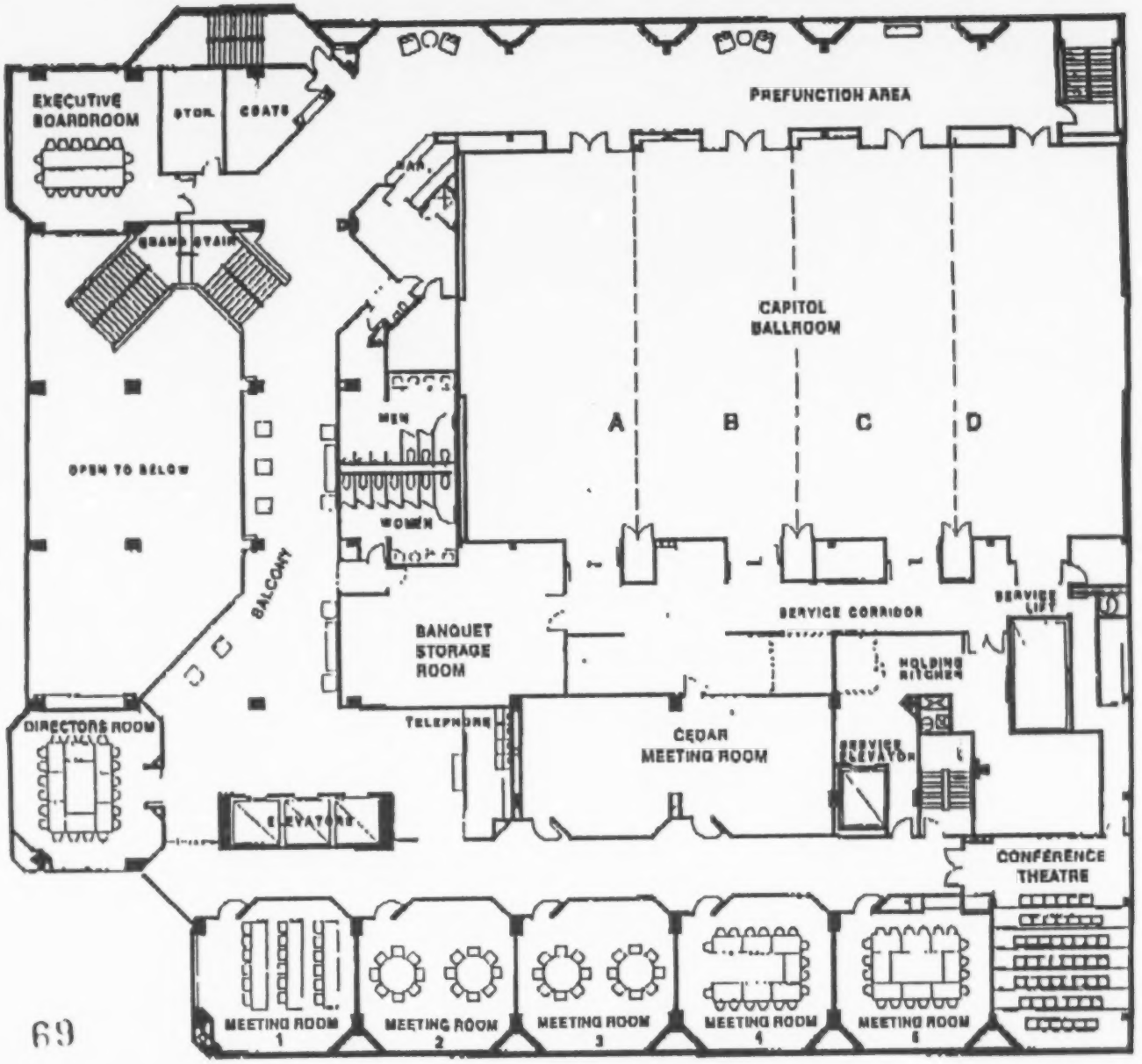
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